United Nations ST/IC/2008/20

Secretariat

17 April 2008

Information circular*

To: Members of the staff

From: The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management

Subject: **2008 competitive examination for French interpreters**

1. The purpose of the present information circular is to invite applications from staff members of the Secretariat at the P-3 level and below who wish to take the competitive examination for French interpreters in 2008, in accordance with the provisions of ST/AI/1998/7 of 23 March 1998.

2. A competitive examination for French interpreters will be held on **30 July 2008** in New York, Geneva and other locations, according to the number and location of qualified candidates invited to take the examination and the availability of necessary technical equipment. The purpose of this examination is to establish a roster from which present and future vacancies for French interpreters will be filled. When vacancies occur, successful candidates will be recruited from the roster, subject to the requirements of the service in terms of expertise and language combinations.

3. The examination is open to staff members of the United Nations at the P-3 level and below who meet the eligibility requirements, as well as qualified external candidates. Staff members from subsidiary organs of the United Nations and staff members whose service is limited to a particular organ, fund or programme of the United Nations or special mission are considered external candidates for the purpose of this examination. Staff members who are successful and are selected for inclusion in the roster will be assigned to fill vacancies for French interpreter posts as they occur in New York, Geneva, Vienna and Nairobi. Appointments are subject to rotation and interpreters may thereafter be called upon to serve at other duty stations, according to the needs of the Organization. Interpreters are expected to serve **a minimum of five years** in a language post. The appointment of staff members of the United Nations who are successful in the examination and are selected to fill vacancies will be subject to the conditions set out in paragraphs 11 to 14 below.

* Expiration date of the present information circular: 31 December 2008.

08-31006 (E) 230408

4. Staff members of the Secretariat applying for the examination must:

(a) Have French as their main language;[1]

(b) Have a perfect command of French and an excellent knowledge of English and Russian. The Board of Examiners, appointed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management, requires that candidates' claims to knowledge of official languages must be supported by relevant documentation in their official status files. For this purpose, staff members should attach to their application either a photocopy of a diploma or a certificate from a language school or a brief explanation in their P.11 form or personal history profile of how they acquired their knowledge of the language claimed. Staff members are advised to submit photocopies, not originals, of such documentation;

(c) Hold a university degree from a recognized school of interpretation in which at least one full academic year is devoted to interpretation. Alternatively, candidates must hold a degree or an equivalent qualification from a university or institution of equivalent status at which French is the language of instruction, and have 200 days of experience as conference interpreters or 200 days of work experience in the field of translation, editing, verbatim reporting or related fields. The Board of Examiners may, at its discretion, admit a candidate graduating from a university whose principal language of instruction is other than French provided he/she has adequate secondary educational qualifications from an establishment at which the principal language is French.

5. The requirement for a university degree or its equivalent from a university or institution of equivalent status, mentioned in paragraph 4 (c), may be waived for staff members who, in the judgement of the Board of Examiners, have adequate post-secondary educational qualifications from a university or institution of equivalent status and adequate secondary educational qualifications from an establishment at which the principal language of instruction is French, in addition to five years of continuous service with the United Nations Secretariat by 31 December 1989.

6. In order to meet the Organization's need to recruit staff for language posts who will serve for a reasonable period of time before reaching retirement age, staff members who do not serve on 100-series appointments and who are over the age of 56 by the deadline for submission of applications, **2 June 2008**, will not be eligible to sit for the examination. There is no age limit for full-time staff members serving on 100-series appointments.

7. All applications will be reviewed by the Board of Examiners. If a large number of applications is received, the Board reserves the right to admit to the examination only the most qualified candidates based on a review of qualifications that are over and above the minimum criteria set out in paragraph 4. All applicants will be notified of the Board's decision in respect of their application. **The Board's decisions are final.**

[1] "Main language" should be understood to be the language into which the candidate is best able to interpret. Candidates' claims to French as their main language must be supported by relevant documentation in their official status files.

8. The examination will consist of two parts:

(a) Simultaneous interpretation into French from recordings of three speeches delivered in English (approximately 5 to 10 minutes per recording);

(b) Simultaneous interpretation into French from recordings of three speeches delivered in Russian (approximately 5 to 10 minutes per recording).

9. On the basis of the results of this examination, the Board of Examiners will invite selected candidates to an interview. The Board will interview the selected candidates to assess general interest, professional experience, knowledge of the United Nations and of current events, personality, willingness to serve at any duty station, adaptability to the prevailing working conditions in the French Interpretation Section and, in particular, ability to work as a member of a team. The interview is an integral part of the examination. Therefore, candidates who are invited for an interview should **not** assume that they will be offered an appointment.

10. On the basis of the overall results of the examination, the Board will recommend to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management the names of candidates who qualify for inclusion in the roster. When vacancies occur, successful candidates will be recruited from the roster, subject to the requirements of the service in terms of expertise and language combinations. All candidates admitted to the examination will be informed in writing of the Board's final recommendation in respect of their candidature. The Board's recommendations are **not** subject to appeal. The Board **does not** release individual scores or results.

11. Staff members selected to fill vacancies will be assigned as French interpreters for a trial period of two years. Staff members at the P-1 level or below will receive a special post allowance to the P-2 level. Staff members at the P-2 and P-3 levels will be assigned at their respective levels.

12. Successful candidates who receive an offer of appointment are strongly encouraged to accept it, as declining may affect their prospects of receiving a subsequent offer.

13. Staff members with a special post allowance to the P-2 level and those already at the P-2 level who complete the trial period successfully and are recommended by the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management and the Office of Human Resources Management will be promoted to the P-3 level. Staff members already at the P-3 level who complete the trial period successfully will be confirmed in their interpretation functions at the P-3 level. Staff members who do not complete the trial period successfully will be reassigned to posts at their previous levels and the special post allowance, if any, will be discontinued.

14. In order to service meetings of the Security Council or the General Assembly, interpreters are often called upon to work outside normal working hours, including weekends and holidays.

15. Staff members applying for the examination should complete the attached form and submit it, together with their personal history profile or P.11 form and the required certificates, **not later than 2 June 2008**, to:

2008 Competitive Examination for French Interpreters
Examinations and Tests Section
Division for Organizational Development
Office of Human Resources Management
Room S-2575
United Nations Secretariat
New York, New York 10017
Fax No.: (212) 963-3683
E-mail: OHRM_exam@un.org

Applications may be sent by e-mail, fax or mail. To the extent possible, applicants are strongly encouraged to submit their applications early and, preferably, by e-mail or fax, not mail.

16. In order to ensure receipt of all applications submitted by staff members from offices away from Headquarters, these staff members are requested to send their applications directly to the Examinations and Tests Section through the Chief Administrative Officer or Director of the United Nations Information Centre of their respective duty stations by **2 June 2008**, the deadline for receipt of applications in the Examinations and Tests Section, Office of Human Resources Management.

17. Applications that are incomplete (without the P.11 form or personal history profile, transcript and/or documented work experience) or are received after the above deadline will **not** be considered.

Application (for staff members of the United Nations Secretariat only)

2008 competitive examination for French interpreters

Index No. ☐☐☐☐☐☐

Last name ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ Category ☐☐ Level ☐☐

First name ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ Male ☐ Female ☐

Date of entry on duty: Month ☐☐ Year ☐☐☐☐

Type of contract: _____ Expiration date: _____

Department/Office: _____ Duty station: _____

Room No. _____ Tel. extension _____ Fax No. _____ E-mail _____

Have you taken this examination before? Yes ☐ Year ☐☐☐☐ No ☐

Have you taken another United Nations competitive examination? Yes ☐ Year ☐☐☐☐ No ☐

If yes, which examination(s)? _____

What is your main language?[a] ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Please complete an up-to-date P.11 form, or preferably a personal history profile, and attach it to this application. Describe your work experience, giving dates and length of time and the organization you worked for as a French interpreter, translator, editor or verbatim reporter.

Please attach also:

1. Academic transcript
2. Documented work experience (if applicable)

Incomplete applications will not be considered.

[a] **"Main language" should be understood to be the language in which the candidate is best able to interpret. Candidates' claims to French as their main language must be supported by relevant documentation in their official status files.**

I certify that the information I have provided above is correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Date _____ **Signature** _____
(When applying by e-mail, type the date and your name above.)

I have read information circular ST/IC/2008/20 and I understand that, if I am successful in the 2008 competitive examination for French interpreters and am recommended for inclusion in the roster, my appointment as a French interpreter will be subject to my acceptance of the conditions of service indicated in paragraphs 11 to 14.

Date _____ **Signature** _____
(When applying by e-mail, type the date and your name above.)